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THE ART AMATEUR.

is thoroughly covered. Very soon the image begins to appear. The plate must not be touched during the development. Let it remain in the dish until the details are all visible. But, as in this case, there are three exposures on one plate, when any division reveals all its details, take the plate out; for we know at once that the time of exposure given to that division was the correct time, the others being either exposed too short or too long a time. Now, take out the plate, and wash it thoroughly under the running water. The plate is now ready for the "fixer."

In the second tray is a solution of hyposulphite of soda, in the proportion of one part of soda to five parts of water; or, a more simple formula is a tablespoonful of hyposulphite of soda in five ounces of warm water. Into this solution the glass is now slipped, and must be completely covered by it. Presently the picture begins to disappear. In time the white film that we have seen covering the glass has entirely vanished. Now remove the glass from the bath and rinse it again in the running water; too much care cannot be taken to do this thoroughly. On holding the glass up to the light the gelatine coating will be seen to have entirely disappeared, but in its place the glass holds a transparent picture. This is the negative which is now set on end to dry. In immediate purpose nothing further need be done with it, since by the development we have discovered whether five, ten or fifteen seconds was the best exposure, and we register in our minds the time of day, and condition of the light for future reference.

M. G. H.

(To be continued.)

SCENE-PAINTING FOR AMATEURS.

I. THE PAINT-ROOM.

IN view of the fact that the painting of scenery is not the cleanliest of artistic operations, I would recommend the amateur practitioner to select as a studio or paint-room a bare apartment in which the spattering of color will not do any harm. Next to the room, your own person is to be considered. Do not undertake to paint scenery with your good clothes on. An old suit, or an outfit of overalls and "jumper," is the appropriate costume for the scenic artist, amateur or professional. Your head should also be covered, as paint has an irresistible tendency to shower on the hair, and the glue used as a medium inevitably clots and tangles it.

The working room should be lofty and extensive enough to permit the canvas to be stretched flat over one wall. Scenes are often stretched upon a floor and painted there; but the continuous stooping required is very trying, even for a professional scene-painter, and would prove a torment and a discouragement to the amateur. Besides, it requires a skilled eye to detect inaccuracies of form and color on a scene which must be looked down upon and viewed in perspective; while with it facing you on the wall it is, like a large picture, ready for criticism, and with its defects and merits plain before you.

A platform for reaching the upper portions of the scene can readily be improvised out of a couple of step-ladders and a plank. See to it that your step-ladders are steady on their legs. The plank should be provided with a couple of upright posts at either end, between which a rope should be stretched to form a hand-grasp at your back. To anyone unaccustomed to balancing on such a perch the operation of preserving the equilibrium might seriously interfere with his painting.

Better than this would be a platform built on a pair of the trestles or "flying horses" used by builders, plasterers and house painters. They can usually be hired; but, if they are not to be found, any carpenter can make them at a small expense, and will instruct you in their use. A two-inch plank between these trestles forms a good platform, and another plank around or two above it gives a rest for the palette and a shelf for pots and brushes, as well as a support against which you can balance.

If you must paint on the floor, stretch and tack your canvas down securely, the tacks being not more than six inches apart, having first swept the space beneath it thoroughly. Provide some blocks of wood and planks, so as to make a bridge on which you can walk over the scene without treading on it, and which you can move as you require. Tie your brushes firmly to long handles, so as to avoid stooping more than is absolutely necessary, and have some boxes made with long handles to carry your paint-pots in. Your straight edges * should

also have handles permitting you to use them without incurring curvature of the spine. By observing these precautions you will be able to use the floor for an easel after a fashion.

Running water, or at any rate an abundant supply, should be at hand in every paint-room. There should be plenty of light, which, if possible, should come from the side of the scene and not from the front. In the latter case the shadow on the canvas of the person at work would be less likely to annoy and confuse him.

II. THE TOOLS.

Passing over the preparation of the canvas, which is an extremely important operation, and demands a chapter to itself, let me give a list of the working tools and materials required. I keep this list quite simple, in order not to overload the novice with encumbrances at the start.

Two important factors in the scenic art are the glue which makes the medium to hold the colors together, and the whiting, the use of which will be duly explained. For the former you need a good-sized glue-pot, of the sort carpenters and cabinet-makers use, and a roomy pail to mingle the glue and water in for the production of size. If there is a stove handy, it will be found convenient for heating the glue. If there is none, a stand with a spirit or oil-lamp under it will answer the purpose. Buy glue of good quality. Common glue dirties the colors and impairs their brilliancy.

A shallow tub is the best receptacle to store your whiting in. The necessity of this material in priming as well as painting, renders it needful to keep a goodly supply on hand. It does not matter, particularly, what kind of vessel you keep it in, however, so long as it will hold water. An old wash-tub, or a section of a liquor barrel, will do very well.

Four dozen earthenware pots, varying in capacity from a pint to a gallon, will be needed for storing and mixing the paint. Any pots that you can readily handle will do.

A slab and muller for grinding colors, or a patent color mill should also be among the implements of the paint-room. The color mill is the more handy and the less costly. Add to this a large palette knife with a broad and pliable blade, a good-sized sponge, a plumb line, such as the builders use, to govern the vertical lines in your designs, some chalk and chalk lines of the carpenter-shop variety, and some common soft charcoal, such as is used for burning. A good supply of fine French drawing charcoal must also be laid in; and of brushes you will require an assortment varying from a couple of large flat ones, for priming (like those used in whitewashing, but with handles) some large round or pound brushes for laying in masses of color, and a dozen or so of sash tools for smaller work, down to some camel's-hair brushes for striping or fine lining. A four-inch flat camel's-hair brush is also useful. Except the few needed for the finest work, the brushes must be all hog tools, and should be well made, firm and springy. There is no economy in buying cheap brushes, for they soon go to pieces.

One or two pounce bags will be needed for transferring designs. They can be made in the following manner: Take a piece of very open canvas, about eight inches square, an old stocking, or anything else through which the pounce powder can sift, and in the middle of it put your pulverized charcoal or crayon, powdered as finely as possible. This, by the way, is what is known in the paint-room as pounce powder. By drawing up the four corners and tying the powder into a hard ball with twine twisted around the waste cloth, you form a round pad, the utility of which you will learn later.

The flogger is used for clearing away the charcoal from the canvas when the drawing is complete. To make one, nail a dozen two-foot long narrow strips of calico around the end of a section of broomstick of the same length and use it like a duster. Your straight edges or rulers should be made of thin, well-seasoned white pine, with a bevel on each edge. You will need three or four, one being exactly two yards long and four inches wide, and marked off in feet to serve as a measure. Another should be thin and pliable enough to admit of being bent when you wish to draw curves and angles. The others may be of any size you choose. Common straight edges are mere strips of wood which the painter grasps by a peculiar grip in the middle, but I would advise you to have yours made with a handle in the centre of their length. It makes their use much easier. The method of using the straight edge had perhaps better be explained here once for all. Grasp the handle with

the left hand and press the lower edge of the straight edge against the canvas, slanting the ruler so as to keep the other edge away from it. Resting your brush against this edge, draw it along the canvas and a line is ruled without any paint dripping on or smearing the scene. You had better practice ruling lines with the straight edge a little before you attempt it on the canvas. It is easily acquired, but rather unhandy for a novice.

Last, but not least among your tools, comes the palette. You should have two of them: one three feet by one and a half, and another four by two, with a rim at the back and ends to keep the color from running off. They may be made with a separate division for each color, and are preferable in that way, as you are saved a continual recourse to your stock pots. Any carpenter will make such palettes for you. They should be of light but sound and well-seasoned wood, and given three or four coats of white lead, being afterward rubbed down with sand-paper to make them as smooth as possible. The difference between a scenic and an ordinary artist's palette is that the latter is a handy little board while the other is like a table-top. The scale on which the scene-painter works requires his materials and tools to correspond in proportion with their productions. You will find it convenient, by the way, to have your palette provided with handles at the ends, to facilitate your moving it.

With these preparations you may be said to have been sufficiently enlightened to get ready for work. Let me repeat the advice to purchase the best materials. There is no economy in poor ones. Cheap brushes dissolve into bristles, and cheap colors show their cheapness on their faces. Bad canvas drinks paint like a sponge and renders back no effect, and poorly seasoned wood warps and splits to pieces. The little extra cost of first-class tools and pigments will come back to you manifold in the end in the superior results attained. A good artist can make some sort of a picture out of any materials, but the better his materials the more worthy of him will be his work.

JOSEPH F. CLARE.

(To be continued.)

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

WITH little prospect this spring of an exhibition by the moribund Society of American Artists, a more than usually good display might have been looked for at the National Academy. It happens, however, the prize exhibition, under the auspices of the American Art Association—which is being arranged at the present writing—has drawn away many of the most interesting pictures. Nevertheless, we find the National Academy Exhibition decidedly above the average in general merit. There is no canvas which deserves to be awarded the popular distinction of "the picture of the season." Indeed, there is hardly the usual number of genre paintings which please most the average visitor. But in technical excellence one finds steady improvement all along the line. We do not wish to be taken too literally—for "on the line" will be found, as usual, the work of academicians who will never improve until they cease to paint.

The hand shows generally gain of skill; but in figure painting, at least, there seems to be a paralysis of the imagination. There is J. G. Brown, who holds his own in his peculiar domain of street boy life; "A Jolly Lot," showing a gang of little gamins amused by the antics of a negro boy, and the greedy urchin, entitled "The Monopolist," being perhaps as good of their kind as can be found. Frederic Dielman strays into the same field with his "Young Gamblers," which looks very like "The Mora Players" he exhibited not long ago. He prefers Italian models with their rich coloring; as did Mr. Brown, who complains that the more picturesque of them—the little street musicians—are no longer to be seen in our streets. F. D. Millet, besides an interesting portrait, sends two genres, excellent in technique, but telling no particular story. "A Window Seat" is similar in composition and treatment of the light to Abbey's water-color drawing, "The Sisters," which has been imitated with more or less skill by many of our younger artists. But Mr. Millet cannot be classed among the imitators; for, if we mistake not, he and Mr. Abbey were together at an Oxfordshire inn when the original and unwitting model, unconsciously posed in full sunlight against the quaint white-curtained window, first aroused artistic admiration. Mr. Millet's version of the incident is new in this country, but it was shown some time ago in London where it was highly recommended. The artist, to our mind, is seen to better advantage

* These terms will all be found explained in their proper place.

in such work than in "The Toilette," where the influence of his friend, Mr. Alma Tadema, is paramount. We are somewhat afraid of this influence, for Mr. Millet's sake, and we caution him against it. He has already learned so well the famous Hollander's secret of painting marble and mosaic, that he gives in this picture more interest to them than to his classically attired maiden, whom no one will mistake for anything but a model.

Louis Moeller follows his "Puzzled" of last year with another study of expression called "Short Measure," portraying the disgusted look of a reputable looking citizen holding up to view a glass, as to the contents of which the good man evidently considers himself defrauded. The artist uses a large canvas and paints with more freedom; but confirms our impression from his former work that he does not find it safe to undertake a picture containing more than a single figure. Rather suggesting, by its dimensions and mode of treatment, Mr. Moeller's little canvas of last year, and certainly in no way inferior to it in execution, is "The Sculptor's Studio," by Charles X. Harris. The composition is clever, but the story it tells is so trivial that one cannot but regret that so much dexterity has been wasted on it. The sculptor, in throwing the wet plaster around a rather vulgar-looking statue, from which he is about to make a mould, has sent some of it into the eyes of his assistant, who, apparently, is roaring with pain, while the sculptor leaps forward to offer his apology. An artist in the background, placidly smoking his pipe, with an amused expression, completes the story. George W. Maynard's "Strange Gods" shows Pompeian maidens curiously examining some little Egyptian idols. It is well painted. "The Gossipers," by George W. Brenneman, has a good lamp-light effect. Gilbert Gaul sends two reminiscences of the war—"Guerillas Returning from a Valley Raid" and "On the Look-out." The figures in both are full of character; but the types are unnecessarily repulsive.

Francis Jones's charmingly told little story, "Exchanging Confidences" between an old grandfather and a bright little girl who are talking across the table, calls for nothing but praise. Charles Ulrich is creditably represented by the canvas called "Waifs," which shows a cheerless room in a Dutch orphan asylum, into which the sun comes with the increased force caused by the reflection from the white wall in the little garden patch, revealing some rather uncomely children, in the peculiar costume of their class, seated about a girl older than themselves, who is blowing soap bubbles for their amusement. The execution displays no little technical skill, but the chief charm of the picture lies in the simplicity of the story and the honesty with which it is told. Admirers of T. W. Wood will find him at his best in "The Difficult Text" which is puzzling two old-fashioned American villagers, one of whom presumably is the parson.

If we have left until the last of the few genre pictures in the exhibition found worthy of mention those of the brothers Percy and Leon Moran, it is not because that is their place in order of merit, but because we would make a special point in favor of these talented young painters. While they were only boys, it was the privilege of The Art Amateur to find them out and give the first public notice of their precocious abilities; they were made the subject of an illustrated notice for which, at our invitation, they furnished the clever pen drawings. Since then Percy and Leon Moran have been fairly before the public. They have run the gauntlet of criticism, and stood it well. About the severest thing that has been said of them is that they are "too clever." That is a failing hard to correct; and as they seem to grow more clever with each successive exhibition, it is to be feared that their work this spring is more than ever open to this grave imputation. This drawback, together with the further objection of their youth, for a time excluded them from the American Water Color Society; both grounds of complaint being radically opposed to the traditions of the organization and being conspicuously absent in the members most energetic in honoring the young men with their ill-will. But those chivalrous gentlemen need not wholly despair; for while they can hardly hope the latter will grow less clever—even under such favorable conditions as their newly acquired fellowship—the latter will, at least, in time, overcome the fault of youth. "Coming from Church—Old New York," by Percy Moran, admirable in execution, tells its story well, and the composition shows marked improvement over any previous work we can call to mind from the same hand. The color is wonderfully delicate and harmonious, with here and there certain deft little touches—such as in the feather of the lady's

bonnet—hardly possible but for the artist's skill in the use of water-color, which medium they at once suggest.

Leon Moran's "Waylaid" is not inferior in point of technique—the color is delightful and distributed with even more than the artist's usual skill; but the picture has not the earnest qualities of the other. It is not satisfying. One cannot help feeling that the horses, which must have been attached to the carriage, were set free rather because Mr. Moran did not care to undertake the job of painting them, than that the traces were cut by the highwaymen, which we presume to have been the case. Their absence and that of the coachman—who could hardly be out of sight—leaves the story incomplete, and the remaining personages are not rendered strongly enough to fill the gap. For a certain kind of cleverness allied with about every conceivable fault, we commend the "Studio Interior," by F. L. Kirkpatrick, which, for some inscrutable reason—for he is not an Academician—is hung in a good position "on the line." So glaring are its faults that the picture would serve very well as "a frightful example" in a lecture on "what to avoid in painting." The badly drawn figures—given with the profusion of something which costs nothing—are jumbled with accessories in a manner quite bewildering. Add to this, wilful indifference to values and rules of composition, and the result is exasperating enough when one remembers that Mr. Kirkpatrick has the gift of color, remarkable facility of execution, and not long ago was an artist full of promise; indeed only recently, if we mistake not, he won some prize in Philadelphia. An old fault, which we have often alluded to, is that his picture, as a rule, is so composed that it may be cut into two and not suffer by the operation. We can recall instances where this was no drawback; because the bad half could be thrown away, and a good picture would remain. But in the case of the picture under notice we cannot conceive of any person of taste wanting to retain either half. Chelminski's characteristic scenes in Central Park and "On the Beach" have been noticed in these columns. Rhoda H. Nichols, in her chosen field, the strongest painter among her sex in this country, is seen at her best in "A White Wall of Venice," which, with its deep Italian sky, brilliant-hued foliage, glaring masonry, and sunlit water, with foreshortened gondoliers lazily rocking between the piles at the wharf—the whole excellent in color and vigorous in execution—contains uncommon claims to public recognition. In "The Old Garden" Walter Satterlee has produced a good open-air effect.

The cattle painter, William Hart, appears in a new rôle, with a scantily clad young woman for his subject. He calls her "A Modern Cinderella," which perhaps is as good a name as any other for the model he has posed; but, to tell the truth, Mr. Hart is not to be congratulated on his new departure: he has surprised his friends without pleasing them. C. Y. Turner shows us a favorite model of his of whom the public must be getting very weary. This time he put a human skull in the hands of the old man, and calls the picture "An Emblem of Mortality." Sarah P. Dodson sends, as usual, a large scriptural canvas. The hands of Moses are being upheld by Aaron and another, while a battle between the Israelites and the Amalekites is presumably raging on the plain below. There is much to praise in the work, but this talented lady is too ambitious.

In portraiture the exhibition is unusually weak, and Eastman Johnson easily bears off the palm with his likeness of Senator Evarts, which presents a face full of dignity and power. B. C. Porter has a striking picture of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt's little son and a noble hound, the whole boldly painted in a low key of grays and reds against a greenish gray background. The portrait of the boy is said to be good; but as a picture the work does not please on further acquaintance, the chief defect being in the carnations of the face, which are too strong for the general color scheme. F. D. Millet sends a good portrait. The two by J. Alden Weir do not show that clever artist to advantage. We prefer to remember him by his admirable portrait of Richard Grant White, whose recent death gives to it a new interest.

Marine painting is creditably represented by many interesting canvases, including Thomas Moran's "Fingal's Cave;" Edwin Moran's "Fishing Boats in the Irish Channel;" a large canvas by Harry Chase, "New York Harbor, North River," and a smaller one, "Rising Tide—Dutch Coast"—both generally admirable, but rather "painty," a defect perhaps inseparable at times from the artist's uncompromising love of sunshine; De Haas's "Saluting the Admiral's Yacht, 17th Century," and "Towing in Evening"—the latter with charmingly ren-

dered opalescent reflections from an incipient sunset—and Cornish coast views by Arthur Quartley. G. Wharton Edwards's "Nightfall on the Bridge" cannot be counted a success. His "At Ebb of Tide" bears a striking resemblance to a work by Ulysse Butin, exhibited in Paris in '78. One may always look for something to admire in the work of R. Swain Gifford and H. Bolton Jones, and both of these admirable landscapists fulfil our expectations in the present exhibition. The same feeling might reasonably be expressed of George Inness and J. Francis Murphy; but this time with not quite the same result. Power and sweetness, as usual, characterize respectively their work; but the power of Inness's boldly decorative "Sunset" is not of the spontaneous kind that does him most credit, and the sweetness of Murphy in "Tints of a Vanished Past," a landscape undeniably charming in sentiment, does not reconcile us to its washed-out appearance. One of the critics, we notice, compares the execution of Inness's "Sunset" with that of the famous "Le Givre" of Rousseau in the Walters collection. The comparison is not fortunate; the rudeness in execution of the latter is due to the anxiety to complete the picture before the impression of it had faded away—in the foreground you can see little patches of the bare canvas beneath the hastily applied pigment; the roughness of the foreground of Mr. Inness's picture, with its unqualified greens opposed to the blazing orange-hued sky, is due to the piling on of pigment to correct, apparently, the first recorded impressions—it is as if the picture had been painted from nature and repainted in the studio. H. P. Smith continues imitative, but his Rousseau-ish "Old Oaks" hardly deserves to be banished to obscurity in the corridor. We have space only to mention the names of Smillie, T. Moran, Bristol, Shurtleff, Van Boskerck, Wyant and Edward Gay, whose contributions do them much credit.

The hanging committee has been unusually severe with the flower painters. Julia Dillon's "Wild Flowers," "Chrysanthemums," "Safrano Rose" and "Water Lilies" are all painted with more than usual ability, and are all badly hung. Eleanor Greatorex's strongly painted "Chrysanthemums" are better treated. Agnes D. Abbott, among other highly creditable work, sends some delightfully painted "Roses," which make a bright spot in the South Gallery.

The sculpture this year is so poor as hardly to deserve mention. Happily, there is very little of it. Would it not be well for our representative sculptors, who no longer send to the Academy, to organize an exhibition of their own?

Besides the usual catalogue, which fully sustains its reputation for typographical inaccuracy and as being the shabbiest-looking pamphlet of its kind in the country, there are two independent publications issued in connection with the exhibition: Charles M. Kurtz's "National Academy Notes" and complete catalogue, with nearly a hundred fac-simile sketches of pictures, personal notices of the artists, and much valuable general information, published by Cassell & Co.—a useful souvenir; and a new-comer, "Etchings of Notable Academy Pictures," issued by G. W. H. Ritchie, in imitation of a similar publication at the Paris Salon—a neatly printed pamphlet, with many pages of exceedingly pointless letter-press.

THE method of work adopted by John Downman, an English miniature painter of the last century, suggests some interesting experiments in portrait sketching. Downman was particularly celebrated for the grace and elegance of his female portraits. He drew on paper, securing an outline in profile by preference to any other view, and drawing this outline with extreme precision and delicacy. The face he finished very daintily, stippling it in water-color. The background he rubbed in with lead-pencil and a stump to force the face out; and he suggested the hair and body with free lines of the stump. This method makes his faces the most prominent parts of his drawings, while they are sufficiently finished in their accessory details to pass muster.

FLOWER pictures of extraordinary crispness and brilliancy are possible in pastel. To secure these qualities, however, certainty of hand is necessary. Every touch should tell. Make your arrangement of the flowers as simple as possible, study it well before you begin to put it on paper, and then try to put it down as you see it, without alterations. If you fail, try a fresh paper. The result will repay you the sacrifice of material. The beauty of a pastel drawing is in the clearness of its tints, and the more you rub and alter, the farther you will remove yourself from this desirable end.